

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 EB-11 AGR-20 OMB-01 IO-14

COME-00 IGA-02 DRC-01 /146 W
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O 180545Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4209

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI IMMEDIATE

JCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDSGTE

USSAG IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 14094

FOR STATE/AID

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, EAID, CB

SUBJECT: RICE FOR CAMBODIA

REF: SAIGON 21025

1. WITH ONLY 14 DAYS TO GO BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, IT IS STILL JUST POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE TYE TARGET OF 45 DAYS' RICE SUPPLY IN-COUNTRY BY DECEMBER 31, 1973 BUT THIS IS GOING TO REQUIRE EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT BY AND COORDINATION BETWEEN ALL INTERESTED PARTIES. AT BEST, WE CAN PROJECT TWO MORE MEKONG RICE CONVOYS BETWEEN DECEMBER 20 AND 31, ONE OF WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE SPECIAL.

2. BECAUSE OF UNEXPECTED DIFFICULTIES, STRIKES, VESSEL RUNNING
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AGROUND, AND THE BUNKERING PROBLEMS DESCRIBED IN REFTTEL, THE

REGULAR MEKONG CONVOY SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE PHNOM PENH DECEMBER 19 WILL BRING ONLY 5,300 M/T OF RICE. DAILY RICE DISTRIBUTION IS HOVERING BETWEEN 600 AND 650 M/T SO THAT BY DECEMBER 20 PHNOM PENH WILL HAVE 17 DAYS' OF SUPPLY OF RICE. USAID/SAIGON BELIEVES IT CAN HAVE SIX VESSELS/BARGES LOADED AND BUNKERED IN TIME TO LSFVE VUNG TAU DECEMBER 21 WITH A TOTAL OF 10,400 M/T OF RICE REPRESENTING THE FINAL BALANCES OF THE ROK AND GVN LOANS. THIS INPUT WOULD GIVE PHNOM PENH 29 DAYS' SUPPLY BY DECEMBER 24. AFTER THAT, EVER-

YTHING DEPENDS ON THE TIMELY ARRIVAL AT SAIGON OF THE S/S PHILIPPINE BEAR WITH 10,000 M/T OF US RICE. THE ETA SAIGON FOR THIS VESSEL IS NOW DECEMBER 21, USAID/SAIGON'S PLAN IS TO BRING COASTERS/

BARGES ALONGSIDE THE PHILIPPINE BEAR FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSSHIPMENT IN ORDER FOR THESE CRAFTS TO JOIN THE NEXT REGULAR MEKONG CONVOY LEAVING VUNG TAU DECEMBER 25. IF THIS WORKS OUT, PHNOM PENH WILL RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 M/T BY DECEMBER 27, AND THE STOCK ON HAND DECEMBER 31 WILL CORRESPOND TO A 35 DAYS' SUPPLY, TO WHICH US RICE PRESENTLY STORED IN KOMPONG SOM WILL ADD ANOTHER 9.8 DAYS FOR A TOTAL IN-COUNTRY OF 44.8 DAYS' SUPPLY BY DECEMBER 31.

3. THE FOREGOING SCHEDULE LEAVES NO ROOM FOR CONTINGENCIES. A SPECIAL CONVOY MUST BE SCHEDULED FOR ETD VUNG TAU DECEMBER 21, AND PROVISIONS MUST BE MADE NOW TO DELAY THE NEXT REGULAR CONVOY BY 24 HOURS, IF NECESSARY. THESE TWO STEPS WILL BE NECESSARY TO AVERT THE POSSIBLE REOCCURANCE OF A CRITICAL RICE SITUATION. ABOVE ALL, THE NEW MEASURES TO STABILIZE THE ECONOMY WHICH WE HOPE TO HAVE THE GKR UNDERTAKE ARE BASED ON A GENEROUS SUPPLY OF RICE IN THE CAPITAL.
ENDERS

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Message Attributes

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